







From: EPA News [noreply@cision.com]
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To: Harris, Michael [harris.michael@epa.gov]
Subject: EPA Chicago - Daily Media Report - Friday, September 24, 2021


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Report Overview:

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 Cleanup - Superfund (1)
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 Grants (1)
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Headline	Date	Outlet	Outlet State	
Cleanup - Superfund (1)				
 Pollution in Lake County threatens public health	09/23/2021	Daily Herald - Cook County	IL	 
Environmental Justice (2)				
 First Solar recognized for environmental efforts by Ohio EPA	09/23/2021	WTVG-TV Online	OH	 
 Ohio EPA announces 2021 Encouraging Environmental Excellence winners; Weastec among honorees	09/23/2021	Highland County Press Online	OH	 
Grants (1)				
 Ohio EPA loan helps McComb finance improvements	09/22/2021	Courier, The	OH	 
Water - Drinking (1)				
 Safe-water aid coming for Benton Harbor; State to offer filters, blood-lead testing	09/23/2021	Detroit Free Press	MI	 
Water - Surface (1)				
 Wisconsin tribal official to help advise EPA on protecting	09/23/2021	Post-Crescent Online	WI	 

Other (1)

 **Orwell plans to replace sewer plant equipment** **09/23/2021** **Ashtabula Star Beacon OH Online**



News Headline: Pollution in Lake County threatens public health | 

News Date: 09/23/2021


Outlet Full Name: Daily Herald - Cook County

Outlet State: IL

News Text: Pollution in Lake County threatens public health Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., but in Lake County, Illinois, the leading cause of death is cancer. This makes sense considering how certain areas, mostly located in underserved communities, have a long history of environmental injustice.

For decades, Johns Manville polluted the Waukegan lakefront with asbestos and for over 100 years, the Waukegan NRG coal plant polluted the county's land, air and water. In the 1970s, the EPA found carcinogenic PCBs in Waukegan's harbor, the world's largest spill and cleanup did not finish for another 20 years. In total, there are five Superfund sites in Waukegan with hazardous pollutants that will require long-term cleanup. Not surprisingly, only two years ago, frontline communities learned that Medline in Waukegan and Vantage in Gurnee had been releasing the carcinogen Ethylene Oxide (EtO) at toxic levels for years at their factories and five off-gassing warehouses throughout the county. It is important to note that these environmental justice communities have only learned of the pollution years after it started and they were educated about the coal plant's impacts by the Sierra Club and about EtO pollution from a journalist. Lake County residents need to actively demand that their legislators, the EPA and the IEPA take proactive efforts to educate communities about all local toxic pollution and prohibit and remediate toxic pollution. Gloria Charland Ingleside

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News Headline: First Solar recognized for environmental efforts by Ohio EPA | 


News Date: 09/23/2021

Outlet Full Name: WTVG-TV Online

Outlet State: OH

News Text: COLUMBUS, Ohio (WTVG) - Fifteen organizations from around Ohio, including one from Wood County, were recognized by the Ohio...

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News Headline: Ohio EPA announces 2021 Encouraging Environmental Excellence winners; Weastec among honorees | 

News Date: 09/23/2021

Outlet Full Name: Highland County Press Online

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ...visit www.epa.ohio.gov/ocapp/ohioe3 or call 1-800-329-7518. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency was created in 1972 to...

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News Headline: Ohio EPA loan helps McComb finance improvements | 

News Date: 09/22/2021

Outlet Full Name: Courier, The


Outlet State: OH

News Text: McCOMB â€” A \$58,250 loan from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will be used by McComb toward storm sewer and street improvements.

The loan will help finance the design of the Church Street storm sewer interceptor from West Creek to the abandoned railroad, including storm sewer improvements to Cherry and Pleasant streets and reconstruction of Church Street between West Cooper and North streets.

Statewide, Ohio EPA awarded more than \$97.8 million in loans during the second quarter of 2021, including \$17 million in principal forgiveness. Funding includes assistance to local health districts to help low-income property owners repair or replace failing household sewage treatment systems.

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News Headline: Safe-water aid coming for Benton Harbor; State to offer filters, blood-lead testing | 

News Date: 09/23/2021

Outlet Full Name: Detroit Free Press

Outlet State: MI

News Text: "This door-to-door effort is to not only make sure that everyone who wants a filter gets one, but also providing education and hands-on help in installing and maintaining the filters."

Scott Dean

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy spokesman

Residents of Benton Harbor with elevated levels of lead in their municipally supplied drinking water have help on the way from the state of Michigan - less than two weeks after 20 nonprofit organizations appealed to the federal government to take action.

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy on Wednesday announced several steps that will be taken to assist the community, including providing bottled water, going door-to-door to ensure distribution and proper installation of faucet lead filters, and testing of the blood-lead levels of children.

The moves come after 20 environmental and public advocacy organizations filed a petition with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, urging federal intervention to secure safe water supplies for the southwest Michigan city's nearly 10,000 residents. The ongoing exposure to high lead levels for Benton Harbor residents, 85% of whom are Black, hearkened many back to the Flint water crisis of 2014, and was framed as an environmental justice issue.

Since fall 2018, more than 60 homes in the city have tested for lead levels in their drinking water that exceed the federal government's action level of 15 parts per billion. One home tested for 889 parts per billion, nearly 60 times the federal safety limit.

"The State of Michigan remains committed to ensuring every Michigander has access to safe drinking water," EGLE spokesman Scott Dean said. "Benton Harbor's aging drinking water infrastructure is a major focus of that effort and the work to remove lead from people's drinking water is accelerating."

The Rev. Edward Pinkney, president of the grassroots Benton Harbor Community Water Council, praised the new developments. Pinkney made an urgent appeal for federal, state or local governments to provide an alternate water supply at a press conference announcing the EPA petition Sept. 9.

"I am happy to see that they have taken my advice and are putting this into operation," he said. "We shouldn't have had to wait three years for this - that's the unfortunate part."

Dean said the residential door-to-door effort will "provide assurance that every household in Benton Harbor has been visited and offered a free water filter as part of an enhanced filter distribution effort." The plan is to complete this effort by Oct. 8, he said. Free bottled water will be made available to the community until the filter distribution is completed.

An expanded public education and community outreach campaign also will be conducted to increase awareness of the city's current water quality and the availability of water filters and resources for residents, Dean said.

"We're acting on the feedback from residents that they either didn't know about the 2019 filter distribution or didn't know how to install or maintain the filters," he said. "This door-to-door effort is to not only make sure that everyone who wants a filter gets one, but also providing education and hands-on help in installing and maintaining the filters."

But an official with the environmental nonprofit Natural Resources Defense Council, which helped drive the petition effort to the EPA on Benton Harbor, questioned the plan, particularly its cut-off time for supplied water.

"The emergency water must continue until we are well beyond clearly demonstrating these filters are effective," said Cyndi Roper, a senior policy advocate with the NRDC.

People must have confidence in the effectiveness of the filters as well, she said.

"Their trust has been violated," Roper said. "Drinking water has not been safe for at least the past three years. We cannot cut corners when it comes to ensuring they have the water they need, and that it is not being run through unproven filters."

"There's this ongoing issue - as we all saw in Flint - of filter maintenance, and of ensuring that the filters are being used properly. That it doesn't end with a swing through the community, dropping off filters and having a conversation about filter use."

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services will establish an ongoing Water Ambassadors Program to recruit "trusted non-government community members to assist with individual outreach at a grassroots level to help build trust with the community," Dean said.

Health officials also are developing a longer-term plan to ensure Benton Harbor residents are supported with public health resources, "including access to lead mitigation measures and blood-lead level testing" for children, Dean said.

According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, no safe level of lead in children has been identified. Adverse affects from excessive exposure to the heavy metal include:

Damage to the brain and nervous system

Slowed growth and development

Learning and behavior problems

Hearing and speech problems

High lead exposure also has been tied to lower IQ, decreased ability to pay attention and underperformance in school.

"That is huge - that has never taken place here," Pinkney said of the blood lead testing in children.

Roper noted that the state's end-of-October time frame for testing children's blood for lead, combined with adding lead water filters to people's taps in early October, could mean that by the time testing is done, "the lead that would have been in their blood will have likely moved into the soft tissue and bones" - still capable of harming their health, but less likely to turn up in a blood test.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's budget included \$10 million in additional investment to replace lead service lines in Benton Harbor and \$15 million for the Emergency Drinking Water Fund to help the state address future drinking water emergencies.

"As part of this investment, the state will also provide technical support to communities dealing with lead service line removal," Dean said.

All together, the state has leveraged \$18.6 million and has committed to replacing 100% of Benton Harbor's lead service lines.

But waiting on the pipe replacements would have left residents drinking potentially lead-tainted water in the interim, perhaps several years. That's what makes the latest announcements important, Pinkney said.

"We're going to do what we need to do to make sure this community has safe water," he said. "That's our only priority. I don't care about the politics of this, or any of that. We can no longer sit by and let our children be poisoned with lead."

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"This door-to-door effort is to not only make sure that everyone who wants a filter gets one, but also providing education and hands-on help in installing and maintaining the filters."

Scott Dean

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy spokesman

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News Headline: Wisconsin tribal official to help advise EPA on protecting water and environment | 

News Date: 09/23/2021

Outlet Full Name: Post-Crescent Online

Outlet State: WI

News Text: Wisconsin tribal official to help advise EPA on protecting water and environment

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News Headline: Orwell plans to replace sewer plant equipment | 

News Date: 09/23/2021

Outlet Full Name: Ashtabula Star Beacon Online

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ... The effluent sampler and meter will be replaced, as required by the Environmental Protection Agency, at a cost of \$12,256.84,...

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